

### *Melancon Voted for Funding to Prevent Domestic Violence and Support Victims*

September 15, 2010

WASHINGTON – U.S. Congressman Charlie Melancon (LA-03) announced today that domestic violence support and prevention programs in Louisiana have been awarded \$2,073,475 in federal funding through the U.S. Department of Justice's STOP Violence Against Women Program. The funding will support the coordinated efforts of Louisiana's criminal justice system and non-profit organizations to serve and advocate for women who are victims of violent crimes.

Congressman Melancon has fought for more federal funding to prevent domestic violence and support women who are victims of violent crimes. Last year, Congressman Melancon voted for the legislation funding today's \$2 million investment in Louisiana's domestic violence prevention initiatives. In July, Congressman Melancon [requested additional emergency federal funding for domestic violence programs](#) in south Louisiana to support the increased demand for services since the BP oil disaster in the Gulf began.

**"When violence happens in the home, too often women feel like there is no place they and their children can go to be safe,"** said Rep. Melancon. **"Shelters and victim services organizations in Louisiana are doing the best they can, but many are struggling with both shrinking budgets and greater demand because of the economic downturn and BP oil disaster.**

**"This STOP Violence Against Women funding will provide some relief to Louisiana's domestic violence programs, and help more abused women and children find a safe haven. This investment will also support law enforcement and prosecutors in bringing abusers to justice, breaking the cycle of violence too many women find themselves trapped in. I voted to fund the STOP Violence Against Women program because everyone deserves to feel safe from harm in their home."**

The [STOP \(Services, Training, Officers and Prosecutors\) Violence Against Women Grant Program](#) works to strengthen the partnership among law enforcement, prosecution, courts and victim services organizations to protect and support victims and hold offenders accountable for their crimes against women.

The \$2,073,475 in federal funding announced today will be distributed to law enforcement, prosecutors' offices, and courts across Louisiana to respond to violent crimes against women. A portion of the funding will also be distributed to a statewide network of nonprofit, nongovernmental victim services programs to provide shelter, protection, advocacy and other services to women who have been victims of violent crimes.

The grant was welcome news to the [Louisiana Coalition Against Domestic Violence](#), a statewide network of domestic violence programs and supportive organizations working to end violence against women and children in Louisiana.

The Coalition's executive director, Beth Meeks, said, **"These federal dollars are truly the**

**foundational support for our programs. Since the Oil Spill, our facilities in South Louisiana have seen such an increased demand for shelter and other services.**

**“But, as they are trying to respond to this increase, they are losing so much money. Donations and fundraising are down between 30 percent and 60 percent, because the people in South Louisiana worked for the oil industry and as fishermen and shrimpers and so, now, they are out of a job and can’t give. That is why these federal grants are so important.”**

The federal funding will be distributed to law enforcement and victims’ organizations by the [Louisiana Commission on Law Enforcement](#)

. While some programs will receive funds directly from the Commission, equal portions will also be given to Louisiana’s eight law enforcement districts to improve victims’ assistance and advocacy in the courts

**“As always, our mission is to serve the criminal justice system,”** said Louisiana Commission on Law Enforcement’s Executive Director Joey Watson.

**“We are always looking for additional funding sources to support our programs and this funding gives us an opportunity to help the efforts throughout the state to stop violence against women.”**

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